

2: Adams E-4.5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9  
(1932-1971) Barama River

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241 To stagger the harvest, planting occurs over a period of time.  
However, once planted a field is rarely tended. Trips are made only  
to harvest foods as they are needed. As grasses choke the cultigens,  
a new field is cut. This happens about every two or three years.

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\*179 Over time, new additions have been made to this intermixture of  
species in the fields. These have come from several sources.  
Table 1 includes a list of the plants Gillin found growing in fields  
and by house sites in 1932-33. Of these, banana, plantain, yam, eddo,  
sugar cane, and citrus fruits were introduced to the New World by  
Europeans (Gillin 1948:825). Obviously, the Barama River Caribs do  
not recognize these origins. In 1970-71, there were many additions  
to Gillin's list. The ones which have been introduced from  
Georgetown are recorded separately in Table 1.

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824 Also, in 1970-71, naturally occurring forest species were found  
in the cultivated fields. As the cultigen community is a duplication  
of the forest flora community, this reflects simply a change of  
location convenient to the human consumer. Thus, the boundary is  
merged between the cultigen community and the naturally occurring  
floral community. All local vegetable food sources are available  
from energy captured from the cycling of energy within the rain  
forest flora community, or a duplication of it.

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654 This integration of food production within the extant biotic  
community has only recently been altered. Fields convenient to  
locations of outside resources have been weeded and replanted for up  
to ten years. The new agricultural methods introduced by the  
government emphasize the single cash crop grown on a larger, exposed

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241 field. Individuals have cut extensive fields to support their  
\*177 competition for the office of Amerindian captain. The impact of these  
• 654 recent departures marked by the increased escape of energy from the  
(622) local forest ecosystem as well as the deterioration of the exposed  
soil through lateralization at some point will impose limiting  
factors on the agricultural development of the area.

222 The forest flora which is gathered for food and other uses is to  
824 some extent defined by individual knowledge. The identification as  
262 well as the preparation are knowledge held by a limited number of  
(463) people. For some fruits, nuts, and roots no commonly known name  
exists in the Carib language. This follows from the nature of the  
food quest. An individual is constantly searching out these vegetable  
foods during the course of his daily activities. Consequently, the  
list of forest flora foods must remain partial. Those recorded by  
Gillin and additions made by 1970-71 field work are presented in  
Table 2.

#### Faunal Resources

22 The faunal resources from the forest are recorded in Table 3,  
262 Those reported by Gillin are presented first, then the current  
additions. As the 1970-71 list was collected in the air strip  
vicinity, the additions reflect a more careful scouring of the  
available foods as a result of a heavier concentration of population  
in one location. On an individual basis, taboos against eating  
monkey and tiger (Gillin 1936:10) have been abandoned. Also, this  
list cannot encompass the many sporadic and minute sources. A person

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464 Periodically, they made field trips to the more remote settlements, including those in the headwaters of the Barima River. Also, more extensive employment was available with the Malaria Eradication Officer. He visits the area about every six months and employs about ten men for periods up to six weeks. The pay for carrying loads for [465] the Agricultural Field Assistant was about \$4 a day. Those men employed by the officers of the Ministry of Health received about \$6 a day.

In short, jobs were temporary and limited, similar to the early employment with transient porkknockers. In contrast to the casual participation in the early opportunities, the limited jobs available at Baramita Air Strip constituted an unemployment problem. The Upper Barama River Caribs before and after thirty years of mining activities were operating on a very different economic basis. The commercial goods and a steady source of provisions provided by employment had come to be a desirable alternative to maintaining a farm in the bush. Nevertheless, due to the impermanence of employment, a Carib who becomes separated from a subsistence relationship to the rain forest is in a precarious position, as witnessed by the subsistence crisis experienced by the former miners and their families when In Time mine was closed. The remaining regional markets available at Baramita Air Strip were specifically intended to augment an agrarian subsistence among the Upper Barama River Caribs.

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654 A large number of men were involved in subsidized agricultural development. In the summer of 1970, the first field was cut. About four acres of black-eyed peas were planted. From the harvest, 350

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654 pounds were received by the Guyana Marketing Corporation in Georgetown. From the sale of this harvest, \$90 was returned to Baramita Air Strip and distributed among the ten or twelve men who had worked on the project. By the fall of 1970, a larger project subsidized by the Government was under way. From among the previous miners, ten were paid \$4 a day to cut fields, plant, and later harvest crops. One man became discouraged before the harvest, and his field was turned over to another. One large field was cut alongside the air strip. Eight men were each apportioned a strip about seventy-five feet by 300 to 350 feet. Two other miners developed a separate field of about five acres which they worked together. The seeds were given by the Government and had to be returned from the harvest. The sale of the remainder of the crop to the Guyana Marketing Corporation was the farmer's profit. Peanuts and red beans were planted, and families were encouraged to help the men in the fields.

In addition to these specific projects, other Carib men were encouraged to grow cash crops with the government loan of seeds. At first, two men participated. They each planted peanuts. The combined March and April 1971 harvest from all of this subsidized farming amounted to 1416 pounds of peanuts, which sold for \$481.44, and 374

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262 pounds of red beans, which sold for \$88.75. Also, in April and again in May of 1971, rations for cooperative farm projects were introduced at Baramita Air Strip. These rations included wheat flour, vegetable oil, and a mixture of cornmeal, soy bean flour, and powdered milk called bulgar wheat. This food<sup>5</sup> was distributed among about twenty-five men from the Air Strip as well as the satellite settlements where others were cutting fields for cash crops.